

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Version # _____

APP # 700243

A. Statement of Planning Objectives

The historic mining of hardrock minerals such as gold, lead, copper, silver, and non- minerals was a powerful incentive for exploration and settlement in southern California. Mineral development often provided the economic base on which many remote communities were established. But when ore bodies were mined out and miners left to find other new deposits, they often left behind a legacy of abandoned mines and safety hazards. The BLM's California Desert District Field Offices and their "Cooperative Conservation" partners mitigate abandoned mine hazards to protect public health and safety, recreation, and wildlife. The Desert District AML Strategic Plan, Nov. 2008, established the context whereby BLM mitigates and remediates hardrock AML sites on or affecting public lands, and correlates field activities with program goals, objectives, and priorities.

Relationships: OHV travel on public lands in the Desert District exposes riders to high probability of literally riding into and/or near dangerous abandoned mine lands. Every year, dozens of people are exposed to danger while exploring or playing on abandoned mine property. Abandoned mine sites have proved to be an irresistible—and sometimes a harmful—draw for children and adults. Vertical shafts can be hundreds of feet deep. At the surface, they may be completely unprotected, hidden by vegetation or covered by rotting boards. Horizontal openings may seem sturdy, but rotting timbers and unstable rock formations make cave-ins a real danger. Darkness and debris add to the hazards. However, the danger to people and the risk of unintended disruption of the life cycle of colonies of rare bat species make closure of abandoned mines imperative.

Requirements before Action: The California Department of Fish and Game and the BLM have designated 15 species of bats that colonize caves and abandoned mines in the deserts of southern California as "species of special concern" or "sensitive species" respectively. Other animals, such as the federally and state of California listed Desert Tortoise and Burrowing Owl (a BLM sensitive species and Fish and Game species of concern) find refuge in abandoned mines. However, vertical shafts from abandoned mines often become death traps for Desert Tortoises falling into them.

This project has three principal objectives:

1. To reduce the risk of injury and harm to people participating in motorized recreation or availing themselves of motorized access to sites of abandoned mine operations on Public Lands managed by the BLM in the California Desert District.
2. To facilitate accomplishment of long-term conservation goals for rare bat species in habitats in or near OHV recreation areas or travel corridors so that conservation and recreation co-exist on these same lands.
3. Assuring that mining related features and facilities abandoned on public land are remediated to minimize damage to the natural environment, while recognizing and protecting the historical importance of selected features and facilities.

BLM's 2008 Performance for Abandoned Mine Land's biological monitoring include:

Barstow FO - El Mirage, Shadow Mts., Johnson Valley, Shining Dawn

El Centro - Cargo, Paymaster, Tumco

Needles - Dollar Hill, Gold Hill, Lucky Day, Riverview, Shadow Mtn

Palm Springs - Otay Mesa mines

Ridgecrest - Rand Mountains, Red Mountain, Spangler Hills

Lake Havasu - Big Maria Mountains, San Bernadino Mountains, Lower Colorado part of California

B. Relation of Proposed Project to OHV Recreation

Recognizing the tremendous growth in the number of off-highway vehicles being used for recreation. The Bureau of Land Management's California Desert District (CDD) encompasses around 11 million acres - approximately one-third of the state. The California Desert District attracts millions of visitors each year that take part in many kinds of recreation. For some, the motorized vehicle is merely a means of reaching a particular place. For others, use of the vehicle for individual

challenge and exploration is the main reason to visit the desert.

Numerous opportunities for off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation exist in each of the five (5) California Desert District Field Offices. Miles of trails and open areas await all types of OHV enthusiasts. OHV adventure may range from extreme to cautious but the same preparation and rules apply. There are inherent risks and dangers when driving in the back-country. These risk include remnants of abandoned mining sites which tell an alluring story about an adventurous time in the Nation's past. Unfortunately, they can also be the subject of distressing news about injuries and fatalities. One of the main goals of the AML program is to address the health and safety hazards that exist in these formerly mined areas. Over the years, the BLM, and their partners, e.g., State of California Department of Conservation (DOC), have worked together to safeguard the lives and well being of individuals who come into contact with these sites. According to the DOC there are approximately 165,000 mine features on more than 47,000 abandoned mine sites statewide. The majority of these are on public lands managed by the CDD.

Relation to Sustaining OHV Recreation Opportunity

In three important aspects, this project addresses sustaining OHV recreation opportunity and building constituencies of support and respect for OHV recreation as a sustainable use of public lands in Southern California.

1. Before any actions are taken on an AML site the site itself must first be looked at by staff. During this visit the BLM's field staff or contracted personnel will determine if remedial activities will impact historical, cultural, or wildlife resources or habitat. The type of AML site activities to be performed determines which regulations guide the site activities. In general, BLM follows National Environmental Policy Act procedures when conducting activities to address physical safety issues and for those sites where activities have historic, cultural, or wildlife impacts.
2. Surveying and monitoring bat colonies in abandoned mines in OHV recreation and travel areas will help protect 15 rare bat species, plus Desert Tortoise, Burrowing Owl, and protecting historic values associated with mine structures, e.g., headframes, in OHV recreation landscapes. Conducting biological and cultural/historic surveys accelerates closure of hazardous abandoned mines where people ride and recreate. Follow-up fencing, gating or constructing protective cupolas (a cost not borne by this grant request) helps to conserve rare bat populations on BLM public lands so that both motorized recreation and biodiversity conservation can co-exist. These conservation efforts are particularly important for maintaining populations of Townsend's Big-eared Bat, a BLM Sensitive Species throughout the desert and sensitive Myotis bat species in the Lower Colorado River Valley. Most bat colonies are small, with less than 30 individuals per mine. Fencing and gating to allow bat flight in and out of abandoned mines prevents unsafe human disturbance to keep mine habitat intact and to keep OHV riders safe.
3. Any injury or loss of human life from OHV riding on public lands from abandoned mine hazards is unacceptable to the OHV riding community. BLM and its partners must act decisively to make OHV recreation areas safer so that individual riders can return to ride another day on Public Lands in the California Desert District.

C. Statement of Activities

The project has the 5 primary actions:

1. Conduct bat surveys and cultural/historic surveys of abandoned mines that pose significant human health and safety risk to recreationist using BLM public lands (see attachment #2 - survey area map). Cultural/historic surveys will include the project footprint and all ancillary facilities; Includes all areas of project impact, disturbance, and adverse effects.
2. While conducting surveys in-the-field take a look at each abandoned mine land physical safety hazard and prescribe a closure recommendation that accommodates seasonal uses by rare bat species and maintains the historic fabric of our mining heritage.
3. Re-visit and conduct monitoring of AML sites which have had bat compatible closures installed in OHV use areas, during the appropriate season(s). This monitoring data will be used to track trends and assist the BLM in its decision making process where AML's co-exist with recreation.
4. Prepare a report of biological findings and closure recommendations for the California Desert District and its respective

Field Office. The BLM will share the findings with Bat Conservation International and the California Department of Conservation - Abandoned Mine Lands Unit.

5. Prepare the necessary documentation of the historic data collected for AML's and closure recommendations for the California Desert District Office and its respective Field Office. The BLM will share the findings of the cultural and historic data that is collected with the California State Historic Preservation Officer.

D. List of Reports

Final Biological Report - Data from the biological surveys five (5) reports will be prepared and provided to the BLM. One report for each of the CDD Field Offices. Report #1 - El Centro, Report #2 - Palm Springs, Report #3 - Needles, Report #4 - Barstow, and Report #5 - Ridgecrest.

Each report will describe mine sites within the priority areas identified that pose significant risk to human health and safety. Components of the biology reports should contain: name of mine, date surveyed, utm location, county, mountain range, type of feature, survey type (internal or external), wildlife presence or absence, wildlife type, visible hazmat, accessibility, and remediation recommendations.

Final Cultural/Historic Documentation - Data generated from the historic surveys for AMLs will be compiled and provided to the BLM. One report for each of the CDD Field Offices. Report #1 - El Centro, Report #2 - Palm Springs, Report #3 - Needles, Report #4 - Barstow, and Report #5 - Ridgecrest. This information will provide the public several things:

- 1) contribute to planning of remediation actions for AMLs and the protection of the public land assets in ways that make optimum use of the many years of land use history, and to safeguard opportunities for achieving appropriate uses of mining relics.
- 2) it will serve as a basis of BLM's inherent Federal responsibility for making determinations under the National Historic Preservation Act, and;
- 3) will serve as part of the BLM's consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and Advisory Council under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act prior to implementing any remediation action.

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1. Timeline for Completion

Attachments:

[Proposed Survey Time Line](#)

2. Optional Project-Specific Application Documents

Attachments:

[2008 Project Photos](#)

[Bats in CDD](#)

3. Optional Project-specific Maps

Attachments:

[Map of the California Desert District](#)

[Map of Survey Priority Areas](#)

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009
 Agency: BLM - California Desert District
 Application: Planning - Bats and Historic surveys of Abandoned Mines in OHV Areas

6/2/2009

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:		Version # _____	APP # _____
APPLICANT NAME :	BLM - California Desert District		
PROJECT TITLE :	Planning - Bats and Historic surveys of Abandoned Mines in OHV Areas	PROJECT NUMBER (Division use only) :	
PROJECT TYPE :	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Education & Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION :	<p>The historic mining of hardrock minerals such as gold, lead, copper, silver, and non- minerals was a powerful incentive for exploration and settlement in southern California. Mineral development often provided the economic base on which many remote communities were established. But when ore bodies were mined out and miners left to find other new deposits, they often left behind a legacy of abandoned mines and safety hazards. The BLM's California Desert District Field Offices and their "Cooperative Conservation" partners mitigate abandoned mine hazards to protect public health and safety, recreation, and wildlife. The Desert District AML Strategic Plan, Nov. 2008, established the context whereby BLM mitigates and remediates hardrock AML sites on or affecting public lands, and correlates field activities with program goals, objectives, and priorities.</p> <p>Relationships: OHV travel on public lands in the Desert District exposes riders to high probability of literally riding into and/or near dangerous abandoned mine lands. Every year, dozens of people are exposed to danger while exploring or playing on abandoned mine property. Abandoned mine sites have proved to be an irresistible--and sometimes a harmful--draw for children and adults. Vertical shafts can be hundreds of feet deep. At the surface, they may be completely unprotected, hidden by vegetation or covered by rotting boards. Horizontal openings may seem sturdy, but rotting timbers and unstable rock formations make cave-ins a real danger. Darkness and debris add to the hazards. However, the danger to people and the risk of unintended disruption of the life cycle of colonies of rare bat species make closure of abandoned mines imperative.</p> <p>Requirements before Action: The California Department of Fish and Game and the BLM have designated 15 species of bats that colonize caves and abandoned mines in the deserts of southern California as "species of special concern" or "sensitive species" respectively. Other animals, such as the federally and state of California listed Desert Tortoise and Burrowing Owl (a BLM sensitive species and Fish and Game species of concern) find refuge in abandoned mines. However, vertical shafts from abandoned mines often become death traps for Desert Tortoises falling into them.</p> <p>This project has three principal objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce the risk of injury and harm to people participating in motorized recreation or availing themselves of motorized access to sites of abandoned mine operations on Public Lands managed by the BLM in the California Desert District. 2. To facilitate accomplishment of long-term conservation goals for rare bat species in habitats in or near OHV recreation areas or travel corridors so that conservation and recreation co-exist on these same lands. 3. Assuring that mining related features and facilities abandoned on public land are remediated to minimize damage to the natural environment, while recognizing and protecting the historical importance of selected features and facilities. <p>BLM's 2008 Performance for Abandoned Mine Land's biological monitoring include: Barstow FO - El Mirage, Shadow Mts., Johnson Valley, Shining Dawn El Centro - Cargo, Paymaster, Tumco Needles - Dollar Hill, Gold Hill, Lucky Day, Riverview, Shadow Mtn</p>		

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009
Agency: BLM - California Desert District
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6/2/2009

Palm Springs - Otay Mesa mines Ridgecrest - Rand Mountains, Red Mountain, Spangler Hills Lake Havasu - Big Maria Mountains, San Bernadino Mountains, Lowever Colorado part of California							
	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
DIRECT EXPENSES							
Program Expenses							
1	Staff						
	Resources Staff	2880.000	49.000	HRS	0.00	141,120.00	141,120.00
	Management and Admin Staff	80.000	53.000	HRS	0.00	4,240.00	4,240.00
	Total for Staff				0.00	145,360.00	145,360.00
2	Contracts						
	Other-Bat Surveys	88.000	800.000	DAY	70,400.00	0.00	70,400.00
	Other-Cultural/Historic Surveys	45.000	600.000	DAY	27,000.00	0.00	27,000.00
	Total for Contracts				97,400.00	0.00	97,400.00
3	Materials / Supplies						
4	Equipment Use Expenses						
	Field Vehicle	6000.000	0.500	MI	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
5	Equipment Purchases						
	Other-Nite Vision Goggles	3.000	3650.000		10,950.00	0.00	10,950.00
6	Others						
	Travel	60.000	100.000	DAY	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00
7	Administrative Costs						
	Administrative Costs-Contract Administra	80.000	50.000	HRS	0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Total Program Expenses					117,350.00	149,360.00	266,710.00

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009
Agency: BLM - California Desert District
Application: Planning - Bats and Historic surveys of Abandoned Mines in OHV Areas

6/2/2009

	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES					117,350.00	149,360.00	266,710.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES					117,350.00	149,360.00	266,710.00

Project Cost Summary for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009
Agency: BLM - California Desert District
Application: Planning - Bats and Historic surveys of Abandoned Mines in OHV Areas

6/2/2009

	Line Item	Grant Request	Match	Total	Narrative
DIRECT EXPENSES					
Program Expenses					
1	Staff	0.00	145,360.00	145,360.00	
2	Contracts	97,400.00	0.00	97,400.00	
3	Materials / Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	
4	Equipment Use Expenses	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	
5	Equipment Purchases	10,950.00	0.00	10,950.00	
6	Others	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	
7	Administrative Costs	0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	
Total Program Expenses		117,350.00	149,360.00	266,710.00	
TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES		117,350.00	149,360.00	266,710.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		117,350.00	149,360.00	266,710.00	

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ITEM 1 and ITEM 2

ITEM 1

- a. ITEM 1 - Has a CEQA Notice of Determination (NOD) been filed for the Project? ☐ Yes ☒ No
(Please select Yes or No)

ITEM 2

- b. ITEM 2 - Are the proposed activities a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378? ☐ Yes ☒ No
(Please select Yes or No)
- c. The Application is requesting funds solely for personnel and support to enforce OHV laws and ensure public safety. These activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No
- d. Other. Explain why proposed activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. DO NOT complete ITEMS 3 – 9

For surveys and monitoring both abandoned mines and their rare bat colonies, the BLM follows a set of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that minimize potential adverse effects to historic relics, rare bat colonies, desert tortoises, and other species of concern to the BLM and the California Department of Fish and Game.

ITEM 3 - Impact of this Project on Wetlands

ITEM 4 - Cumulative Impacts of this Project

ITEM 5 - Soil Impacts

ITEM 6 - Damage to Scenic Resources

ITEM 7 - Hazardous Materials

Is the proposed Project Area located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code (hazardous materials)? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, describe the location of the hazard relative to the Project site, the level of hazard and the measures to be taken to minimize or avoid the hazards.

ITEM 8 - Potential for Adverse Impacts to Historical or Cultural Resources

Would the proposed Project have potential for any substantial adverse impacts to historical or cultural resources? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, describe the potential impacts and for any substantially adverse changes in the significance of historical or cultural resources and measures to be taken to minimize or avoid the impacts.

ITEM 9 - Indirect Significant Impacts

CEQA/NEPA Attachment

Attachments:

[Rare Bat Survey Categorical Exclusion](#)
[Best Management Practices for Survey](#)

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1. Project Cost Estimate - Q 1. (Auto populates from Cost Estimate)

1. As calculated on the Project Cost Estimate, the percentage of the Project costs covered by the Applicant is 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ 76% or more (10 points) ☒ 51% - 75% (5 points)
☐ 26% - 50% (3 points) ☐ 25% (Match minimum) (No points)

2. Planning Project - Q 2.

A Planning Project - Page 1

2. The Planning Project would address the following 3

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on special-status species habitats
☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on cultural resources
☐ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on soil conditions
☐ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on water quality
☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on other recreation uses
☐ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on adjacent lands.
☐ Potential impact to relationships between OHV Recreation and local residents
☐ Toxic or hazardous materials within a Project Area or adjacent property that may impact OHV Recreation
☒ Trail issues such as traffic patterns, trails closures, appropriate uses, etc.

B. Planning Project - Page 2

Explain each statement that was checked

Soils

This project promotes soil conservation by accelerating closures of abandoned mine sites where unnaturally high erosion originating from crushed rock waste and other sediments left near the abandoned mine features has been spreading down slope.

Water Quality

Controlling the man-made sediment erosion from abandoned mine sites in watersheds is critical for sustainable recreation management because of the growing concern on the part of Regional Water Quality Control Boards. Failure to maintain regulatory load limits jeopardizes water quality and undermines BLM efforts to sustain motorized recreation access and opportunity. By halting sediment erosion from abandoned mines in the CDD through abandoned mine closures, the overall sediment load to stream will decline. In combination with trail maintenance, this multi-faceted strategy will reduce sediment for the watersheds overall.

See the project description for benefits to bats and owls; and existing cultural resources by documenting occurrences.

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ 6 or more items checked (4 points) ☒ 4 to 5 items checked (3 points)
☐ 2 to 3 items checked (2 points) ☐ 1 or no items checked (No points)

3. Motorized Access - Q 3.

3. The Project would lead to improved facilities that provide motorized access to the following nonmotorized recreation opportunities 6

(Check all that apply) Scoring: 2 points each, up to a maximum of 6 points (Please select applicable values)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Camping | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Birding |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian trails |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rock Climbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) | |

4. Public Input - Q 4.

4. The Project proposal was developed with public input employing the following 2

(Check all that apply) Scoring: Maximum of 2 points (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Meeting(s) with the general public to discuss Project (1 point)
☒ Conference call(s) with interested parties (1 point)
☒ Meeting(s) with stakeholders (1 point)

Explain each statement that was checked

The author(s) of Desert Fever - a publication on the history of mining in the desert - have expressed concern and interest to the BLM. Conversations and conferences have taken place to insure that surveys are completed so that the actions taken will help document and preserve the fabric of our historic mining heritage.

Bat biologist (Bat Conservation International, Inc.) have expressed concerns that the BLM protect, to the extent possible, wildlife habitat found in the abandoned mines in the desert. The BLM has been in constant communication with this group to ensure that actions taken are not harmful to bats, owls, or other animals. These conversations have been conducted either by phone conference and/or email. The BLM solidified this understanding by signing a Memorandum of Agreement with BCI in January of 2009.

BLM is currently scoping an environmental remediation document for AML's in CDD. 4,000 invitations have been mailed seeking public input. Public meetings are scheduled in late May.

5. Stakeholder Input - Q 5.

5. If the Project were approved, the planning process would incorporate substantial stakeholder input: 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ No (No points) ☒ Yes (5 points)

If 'Yes', explain, specifically, how it would be 'substantial'. Identify stakeholders

This project aids BLM to practice multiple-use management that fits with the vision of the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation to achieve conservation goals for biological diversity and safe, high-quality OHV recreation opportunity jointly and without compromise to either resource.

Stakeholders:

All of the OHV Riding Community
California Department of Conservation
Bat Conservation International
California Department of Fish and Game
National Association of Abandoned Mine Lands
Rock and Gem Collectors

6. Utilization of Partnerships - Q 6.

6. The Project will utilize partnerships to successfully accomplish the Project. The number of partner organizations that will participate in the Project are 4

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☒ 4 or more (4 points)

☐ 1 (1 point)

☐ 2 to 3 (2 points)

☐ None (No points)

List partner organization(s)

Bat Conservation International, Inc.

California Department of Conservation

Maturango Museum

Desert Managers Group

OHV Leadership Council - Desert District

CORVA

7. Sustain OHV Opportunity - Q 7.

7. The Planning Project sustains OHV Opportunity in the following manner 7

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

☒ Project will develop management plans for existing OHV Opportunity (4 points)

☐ Project will complete environmental review for an OHV Development Project (3 points)

☒ Project supports development of OHV Opportunities adjacent to population centers (3 points)

☐ Project supports development of OHV Opportunities in areas that lack legal OHV Opportunity (2 points)

☐ Project will develop a system of designated OHV routes for an existing OHV Opportunity (2 points)

Explain each statement that was checked

The management outcomes from this project expand the capacity of BLM to demonstrate that conservation, in this case of rare bat colonies, historic mining properties, and OHV recreation can co-exist sustainably in the 21st century on BLM lands in the deserts of Southern California.

Human health and safety must be considered when developing OHV opportunities next to population centers.

Removing known hazards such as those associated with Abandoned Mine Lands improves BLM's capacity to plan therefore improving the Bureau's capability to provide safer access.

8. Identification of Funding Sources - Q 8.

8. Funds for implementing the completed plan have been identified 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☐ No (No points)

☒ Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

Funding that supports the CDD-BLM AML strategic plan

(<http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/cdd/abandonedmineland.html>) and this project will be issued in the new fiscal year workplan to the five(5) Field Offices in CDD including the Lake Havasu BLM Office. This will occur in October of 2009.

Reference Document

The AML Strategic Plan is available online at the CDD AML webpage or by visiting the CDD BLM Office for a copy in Moreno Valley California.

9. Offsite Impacts - Q 9.

9. The Planning Project would address offsite impacts relative to the Project Area (e.g., sound, fugitive dust, runoff): 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☐ No (No points)

☒ Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

This project will help BLM in the future by addressing sources and avenues of erosion, from abandoned mines and OHV trails, that produce unnatural sediment loads that pass by way of OHV trails to stream beds, BLM can make managing OHV recreation and access a success in the CDD without compromising air and water quality - California's key resource for everyone's sustainability.